

Montana Baby Boomers Get Fit at the Library

Montana State Library

Helena, MT

Period of Performance: April 1, 2007 - March 30, 2008

Executive Summary:

The Montana State Library will plan and evaluate programming to promote public libraries as sources of health information for baby boomers. The state library will partner with Montana's hospital libraries and their corresponding hospitals, as well as with Montana public libraries, to produce a health fair and to provide trainings to both librarians and to the public. The Montana AARP will distribute information on the health fair and trainings to their 100,000+ Montana members. A TV and radio PSA will be distributed to TV and radio stations statewide. The Montana Medical Association will promote the health fair and NLM resources to their members.

Detailed Results:

Summer 2007 – Conducted initial survey of medical librarians to determine base line measurement of their relationship with their local public library and with the larger Montana library community.

Fall 2007 – Shot television PSA focusing on baby boomer health issue. TV PSA features white baby boomer male and his daughter and resulting high blood pressure. The ad also features the medlineplus.gov and the nlm/pnr logo as was given to us by Roy. The ad aired on cable TV for one month in the fall in Helena, Bozeman, Butte, Billings, Kalispell, Missoula, Great Falls and all surrounding communities. The buy was focused on cable channels most watched by baby boomers, which include all Discovery channels, History Channel, ESPN-2, Lifetime, TNT, CNN, the Weather Channel, the Food Network, and the Home and Garden Network. The total number of advertisements that ran was 2,800. The cable company matched our buy of 1,400 spots and donated a total of 1,400 spots. The development of the ad (\$2,500) was paid for by NNLM. The air time to play the ad (\$4,300) was donated by a local bank.

This ad also ran in the spring of 2008, concurrent with the statewide health fair promotion. The ad aired on cable TV for one month between late March until the first of April, 2008 in Helena, Bozeman, Butte, Billings, Kalispell, Missoula, Great Falls, and all surrounding communities. The buy was focused, as before, on cable channels most watched by baby boomers, which include the same channels as above. As the Fall 2007 buy, the total number of advertisements that was 2,800. The cable company matched our buy of 1,400 spots and donated a total of 1,400 spots.

Fall 2007 – I conducted a series of trainings for librarians with Martha Thayer of the Rocky Mountain Laboratories. This training was divided into two parts. The first section

was devoted to developing and marketing a health fair. The second section was a training on accessing online health information for baby boomers. Approximately 50 public librarians attended this series of trainings.

Fall 2007 – I developed two booklets. The first booklet was a primer on how libraries can develop partnerships to further their goals. Partnerships would be key for many libraries that were planning to develop health fairs. The second booklet was a step-by-step instruction guide on how to develop a health fair with a number of local and national resources listed in the back for further information, give-aways, partnerships, etc. These were printed and mailed to all Montana public and tribal libraries and also distributed at the trainings mentioned above. Printing and mailing of these materials was paid for by LSTA funding.

Fall/Winter 2007/2008 – Lauren McMullen, the Montana State Library training coordinator, developed an online training for Montana librarians on accessing health information and providing it to library patrons. The training was offered several times and for free so that all Montana librarians had an opportunity to participate. There were 77 Montana librarians who attended these online trainings. Development of these trainings was paid for by LSTA funding.

Winter 2007/2008 – Development of print materials for libraries. A number of items were developed for libraries to use to promote their health fair. First we developed a tagline and a logo that would go on all print materials and in a slightly modified version of the print ad. The tagline is: Your library: first aid station for health information. You can see the logo here:

http://msl.mt.gov/whatsyourstory/Tools/special/health_fair/MSL_healthFair_LOGO_WEB.jpg.

Other print items included a series of two newspaper ads, one that featured a white baby boomer male and the other that featured a Native American female. The ads were customizable so that libraries could insert their library name, the events and activities that they were hosting, and the date of their health fair. The ads were designed to fit in a typical newspaper column. You can see the ads here:

http://msl.mt.gov/whatsyourstory/Tools/special/health_fair/HealthFair_4x4EVENTAd.pdf and

http://msl.mt.gov/whatsyourstory/Tools/special/health_fair/hfad1_allevnts_na_blank.pdf

In addition to the ads, there was also a flyer that was developed. Again, we did two different versions (one white and one Native American) and they were customizable. The flyers printed out to be 8.5X11. You can see the flyers here:

http://msl.mt.gov/whatsyourstory/Tools/special/health_fair/hfflyer1_blank.pdf and
http://msl.mt.gov/whatsyourstory/Tools/special/health_fair/hfflyer1_allevnts_na.pdf.

The development of the customizable artwork was paid for with LSTA funding.

In addition to the logo and the customizable ads and flyers, we also developed a poster, which featured the new logo (and the nnlm/pnr logo) and a small business card. The front of the business card featured the new tagline and logo. The back of the card

featured a new public Web portal (<http://mymontanalibrary.com>). The new portal is a place for the Montana public to come in and access statewide library resources easily, such as databases, Worldcat Local, etc. Health resources will be a feature on this new Web site. The back of the card also has a place for a Montana library patron to write in his/her username and the Montana password, discovery, is printed on all cards. The goal of the cards is to address the authentication issue for health databases and make it easier for patrons to log on from anywhere. We also wanted to provide librarians with an easy way to promote the databases. The cards and posters were mailed directly to libraries that have indicated they will host a health fair in April (approximately 30 of our 80 public libraries) and the rest of these materials will be distributed at the Montana Library Association in a couple of weeks. Development and printing of these materials was paid for by the Montana Library Association. The Web site development is paid for by the Montana State Library. Expenses include hosting fees, site maintenance, and approximately 100 hours of staff time for development.

To promote the health fair and to promote the idea of using libraries as a resource for health information, the State Library also paid for a month long sponsorship of the two National Public Radio stations in Montana. These have the potential to reach every single Montanan, and have proven over the years to be one of the most successful ways we have to reach our audience. We sponsored NPR's Morning Edition, Writer's Almanac, and Montana Evening Edition. These programs are widely listened to in Montana, in large cities and in the most rural outposts.

Health Fairs – Approximately 30 Montana libraries hosted a health fair in some shape or form. Some libraries went all the way, hosting a week of events related to health, highlighting their collection regarding health and capping off the week with an actual health fair with dozens of vendors. Other libraries hosted a presentation on accessing reliable health information online. Other libraries participated in existing community health fairs for the first time. We stressed throughout the planning process that it was vitally important for libraries to determine 1) if they would participate; 2) at what level they would participate. Our libraries vary greatly in their physical space, as well as in their staffing and financial levels.

Libraries reported mixed success. The health fair day, April 23, 2008, was the first really nice day in Montana that year – a 75 degree, sunny, perfectly beautiful day. Libraries reported that attendance at the event was not what they had hoped for and many blamed the weather. On the flip side, many librarians felt that the new partnerships they formed in their communities were extremely valuable and hoped to make the health fair an annual event.

Databases – throughout the health fair promotion, one of the State Library's biggest foci was the promotion of our statewide health databases. We saw some great results with significant increases in use of our health databases. The month that we ran the television ad in Fall 2007, we saw a 73% increase in the use of our health databases over the previous month. This increase is attributable to no other factors.

The month of the health fair, April 2008, during which we ran television and radio ads statewide and health fairs were held at libraries throughout Montana, we saw a 78% increase over the previous month. Again, this increase is attributable to no other factors. Over 2008, we saw a 68% total increase in use over what we saw in 2007. Numbers dropped off somewhat after the health fair event concluded, but have mostly remained steady.